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Key member of metal theft ring sentenced to six years

Case reflects proactive new strategies in enforcement and prosecution of metal theft

(Indianapolis, Ind.) Marion County Prosecutor Terry Curry announced today that Jimichael Parker pleaded guilty to and was sentenced for his role in leading a metal theft ring that, over the course of ten months, burglarized four properties in Marion County and one in Madison County. Parker and his associates targeted empty commercial buildings, where they removed copper wire and other valuable metals and resold it as scrap metal.

For his involvement in the Madison County burglary, Parker is currently serving five years in the Indiana Department of Correction. At his sentencing in Marion County Criminal Court 2 today, deputy prosecutors argued that Parker should serve additional time for his role in masterminding a metal theft ring that incurred an estimated \$282,000 in repairs for his victims.

As a result, Parker will serve six years in the Department of Correction for one count of Corrupt Business Influence (Class C Felony) and four counts of Burglary (Class C Felony).

"Utilizing the Corrupt Business Influence and criminal tax charges is one way our office can creatively prosecute metal theft," said Prosecutor Curry. "Just as we have applied the state's RICO statute to criminal gangs, our office is committed to seeking every reasonable avenue within the law to hold accountable groups of people engaged in criminal enterprises."

Deputy prosecutors with the Multi-Jurisdictional Strategy Team (MOST) prosecuted the cases involving Parker and his associates. Housed at the Marion County Prosecutor's Office, MOST deputy prosecutors implement new prosecution strategies and conduct public education and outreach as it relates to burglary and crime prevention. They also work collaboratively with law enforcement agencies in Marion and the surrounding counties to share resources in prosecuting and preventing theft.

"Property crimes are by no means a victimless crime," continued Prosecutor Curry, "because they denigrate the quality of life in our neighborhoods. Anyone who has had the misfortune of being a victim to metal theft knows the costs they face in making repairs to, or even replacing, their property. The ripple effect has lasting repercussions on nearly everyone impacted by the original theft."

One of Parker's associates, Gerald Joyce, already has been sentenced for his role in the metal theft ring. He is currently serving ten years in the Department of Correction, which includes the Habitual Offender sentencing enhancement. The cases against Anton Harris, Antwoine Harris, Clinton Skinner and Courtney Parker are pending.

A charge of a crime is merely an accusation, and the defendant is presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty.